prospecting and exploiting Daphilimali bauxite deposits of Koraput/Kalahandi districts.

Empowering of State Governments to renew mining licence

3927. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to authorise the State Governments to renew mining licences of major minerals;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it is a fact that there has been considerable hardship to the entrepreneurs in renewing the licences?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) State Governments are authorised under the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) act, 1957 to renew mining leases of all major minerals. However, for minerals listed in the First Schedule to the Act, the State Governments need to obtain prior approval of the Central Government.

(c) No, Sir.

Removal of Granite from minor minerals to major minerals

3928. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of
MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal under Government's consideration to remove granite from the minor minerals category and shift it to the major minerals and bring it under the control of the Central Government;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for such a proposal;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the State Ministers of Mines Conference have objected to this proposal; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) No decision to this effect has been taken.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, some States are not in favour of such a move.

Amendment in MMRD Act, 1957

3929. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Federation of Indian Mineral Industries and the Federation of Mining Association of Rajasthan have urged upon Government to expedite legislation pertaining to certain essential amendments in the MMRD Act, 1957 which have become long overdue;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to encourage foreign participation/ investments in exploration and exploitation of minerals both in captive and non-captive mines if so, how it is proposed to be done; and

(d) whether Government propose to bring forward the amending Bill before Parliament during the current session and if not, what is the present stage of progress in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) The Federation of Indian Mineral Industries and the Federation of Mining Association of Rajasthan have made suggestions for amendments to the Mines & Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 and have requested expeditious action. The amendments suggested are primarily intended to liberalise the existing